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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of 47 members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 20 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Djibouti to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly and has the honour to inform him that the Government of Djibouti has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council at the elections to be held on 9 May 2006. The Government of Djibouti is an endorsed candidate of the African Group.

The Republic of Djibouti attaches the utmost importance to the promotion and protection of human rights and supports all international and regional efforts aimed at the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

In accordance with resolution 60/251, Djibouti will submit shortly an aide-memoire containing its voluntary pledges and commitments.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 20 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Djibouti to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly and, with reference to its note dated 20 April 2006 pertaining to Djibouti's candidature to the Human Rights Council, has the honour to transmit an aide-memoire containing Djibouti's voluntary pledges and commitments in accordance with resolution 60/251 (see enclosure).

Enclosure

[Original: English and French]

Aide-memoire

Djibouti's voluntary pledges and commitments in accordance with resolution 60/251

Djibouti has decided to present its candidature for election to the United Nations Human Rights Council at the elections to be held by the General Assembly on 9 May 2006 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251.

Djibouti welcomes the establishment of the Human Rights Council as a significant step in the efforts by the international community to enhance the promotion and respect of all human rights and will continue to support all initiatives aimed at creating a stronger, more efficient and less politicized organization that upholds the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles of indivisibility, interrelatedness and interdependence of all human rights.

International level

The Republic of Djibouti is a State party to the main core United Nations human rights instruments such as:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention on the Rights of the Child

Furthermore Djibouti is a State party at the international level to:

- 1951 Convention on the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

The Republic of Djibouti pledges to ratify:

- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, children prostitution and child pornography
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Regional and continental level

Djibouti is a State party to:

- African Charter on Human and People's Rights
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's rights on the right of women in Africa

Furthermore Djibouti has and will continue to play a critical role in the mediation and resolution of regional conflicts in order to permit suitable and necessary conditions for the protection, promotion and enjoyment of all human rights.

National level

The Constitution places great importance on human rights and civil liberties, and its guarantees conform to the standards under relevant international instruments. Title II of the Constitution and articles 10 to 20 uphold the question of human rights and human dignity.

Furthermore, the country has taken progressive steps to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and in particular those of women on the basis of equality of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

- Djibouti adopted the family code on 31 January 2002, making gender equality a fundamental principle of Djiboutian society and a basis for the strengthening of the family unit.
- The ratio of women's representation in Parliament has passed from none to 11 per cent by enactment from the Government, which counts two women in its cabinet.
- The role of the Ministry of Justice has been enlarged to deal with the question of human rights.
- The Government of Djibouti has created the post of *Médiateur* (ombudsman). The role of this institution is to mediate between citizens and public authorities in order to respect the rules of equality, equity and the primacy of law. It contributes to conciliation between citizens and administrations as well as settlements of administrative disputes while examining complaints of those who consider themselves victims of illegal or inequitable administrative decisions.

Djibouti has shouldered important human responsibilities by protecting and sheltering an enormous number of refugees since its independence in 1977 and in this regard reiterates its commitment to fulfilling its obligations in accordance with the principles of international refugee law and international human rights law.

Committed to continuing its active contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights at all levels, the Republic of Djibouti would highly appreciate the valuable support of the States Members of the United Nations to its candidature.